

***Remarks***

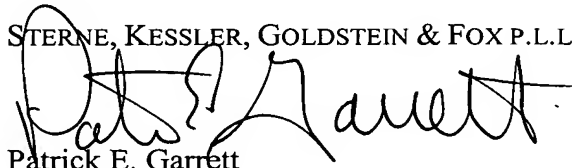
Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-24 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 22, and 24 being the independent claims. Claims 3, 5, 7-14, and 16-21 have been amended to remove multiple dependencies. These changes are made without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

***Conclusion***

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Preliminary Amendment is respectfully requested. Applicants believe the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



Patrick E. Garrett  
Attorney for Applicants  
Registration No. 39,987

Date: 4/21/06

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934  
(202) 371-2600  
523409\_1.DOC